1,40,000 DWT each at a price of US $48.7 million per vessel. These vessels will be delivered to the SCI by October, 2004 and January, 2005 respectively.

**Maritime security**

2318. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has participated in recently held International Maritime Organisation to discuss maritime security and counter-terrorism issues;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the decisions taken thereon;

(c) whether any changes were suggested in existing regulations in the safety at sea convention (SOLAR);

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Intersessional meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee working group on maritime security reviewed the nature and procedure under the existing instruments of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to prevent acts of terrorism and other unlawful acts against ships, passengers/crews on board ships, port personnel, ports and port facilities, with a view to ascertaining the need to update these instruments. Proposals on maritime security issues circulated by various countries including USA, France, Australia, Spain, Argentina etc. were discussed. The Working Group made various recommendations which are required to be deliberated further for a decision.

(c) and (d) The Working Group recommended modifications of the existing Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) to incorporate requirement for a ship security officer, port security plans, port vulnerability assessment and Automatic Identification System (AIS)

implementation schedule. Besides, it was also recommended that a new regulation may be brought in SOLAS, in case it was not found possible to bring in the seafarers identify document requirement through a Protocol to ILO Convention 108.

(e) Indian delegation would participate in the discussions in various Committees of IMO on these issues and project India's views taking into account India's security concerns and the interests of Indian seafarers.

**Constitutional amendment for reservation for SCs/STs in private sector**

2319. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under the present laws the existing system of reservation for recruitment of SC/ST candidates in PSUs will become null and void once they are privatized.

(b) if so, whether Government have done any study on the impact of such privatization on SC/ST candidates in securing professional opportunities;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government would consider a constitutional amendment to extend reservations for SCs/STs even in the case of recruitment in private sector?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) With a view to safeguard interest of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, a 'best endavour' clause is being incorporated in the agreement signed in case of disinvestments to persuade the new management.

(b) to (d) The matter is being reviewed in consultation with the concerned Ministries/Departments.